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Sacramento Area Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) Summary

The California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), will be the initial sponsor for a Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) drawn from all areas in the Sacramento Valley. The Sacramento Area DMAT will be the second DMAT in northern California and one of six within the state.

Why a Sacramento Area DMAT? Both the State EMS Authority and the U.S. Public Health Service have placed high priority on the formation of a DMAT in the Sacramento Valley area. Currently, the Sacramento area is the highest disaster risk metropolitan area in the State of California without a DMAT. With the loss of military resources such as the 175th Medical Brigade, DMATs remain one of the few organized medical resources available for disaster response. DMATs have been effectively deployed in a number of disasters, including the 1994 Northridge earthquake. The timeliness of formatting the Sacramento Area team also falls with the recent Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the California EMS Authority and the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Emergency Preparedness, to establish and maintain a west-coast cache of specialized disaster response equipment and supplies at a warehouse in Sacramento. We anticipate having the Sacramento Area DMAT members involved in these efforts.

Advantages of Participating in NDMS: Although the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) is designed to respond to major disasters, there are immediate regional benefits to States and local communities that participate in the system. Once organized and trained, DMATs could be available to respond to local mass casualty incidents or on an intra-State basis. Thus, the NDMS not only enhances Nationwide medical response capability, it also improves the ability of participating States and localities to respond to disasters within their own jurisdiction and under their own authorities.

Organizational Concept: The organizational concept for the Sacramento Area DMAT is that the team will be made up of members from the entire Sacramento Valley to increase the team base and to maximize team expertise. This may include, but is not limited to, individuals from Sacramento County and the neighboring counties of Placer, Yolo, San Joaquin, Sutter, Yuba, and El Dorado.

Activation: DMATs are initially organized as non-federal volunteers. However, DMAT members are pre-enrolled as U.S. Public Health Service employees and, when

activated by NDMS for service either within or out of state, become federalized and receive a salary commensurate with their assigned general services rating. If activated only at the State level, DMAT members serve as volunteers under the California Disaster Service Worker program and are covered by Workers' Compensation, but are not paid. Generally, DMATs are federalized when responding to a disaster and are State-activated when participating in State-sponsored training programs. DMAT members make no advance commitment to respond to either a federal or state activation.

On Scene of a Disaster: At the disaster site, patients will be stabilized by DMATs or Specialty Teams for transport. As necessary, patients will be evacuated by the Department of Defense (DoD) aeromedical evacuation system. At the airport of the NDMS reception area, patients will be met by a local medical team - which may be a DMAT team - that will sort, assess, and match those patients to participating hospitals, according to procedures developed by local authorities and the local area's NDMS Federal Coordinating Center. Patients will be transported to participating hospitals using locally organized ground and air transport.